

# EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

## MEDICARE MODERNIZATION AND PRESCRIPTION DRUG ACT OF 2002

SPEECH OF

**HON. DARRELL E. ISSA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 27, 2002

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Chairman Thomas, Chairman TAUZIN, and the House Republican leadership for their work on H.R. 4954, a bill which attempts to balance the needs of two national objectives: ensuring that all Americans have access to affordable prescription drugs and exercising fiscal responsibility.

No American should be denied needed prescription drugs because he or she cannot afford them. This bill, if adopted, will ensure that low income seniors, who cannot afford them will receive the prescription drugs they need.

H.R. 4954 takes a new approach to providing Medicare beneficiaries with prescription drugs and improves the mechanisms for paying healthcare providers. Under this approach, the federal government will pay some of the costs and private insurance plans will be expected to pick up the tab for others. This setup will encourage participants to seek out cost effective ways of addressing potential health problems through preventive measures and competitive bidding. Rival proposals that do not include the participation of the private sector choke out the innovation of competition and often lead to price gouging.

According to Congressional Budget Office estimates, H.R. 4954 should fit within the framework of the budget resolution this House agreed to this year. The Democratic alternative to H.R. 4954 would burst the seams of the budget resolution and is in no way a fiscally responsible plan. Nonetheless, I harbor ominous concerns about the wisdom of spending \$350 billion on a new entitlement program at a time when we are already running a deficit. Although I have not seen any specific plan that takes a better approach to helping needy Americans obtain prescription drug benefits, I hesitate in lending my support to H.R. 4954 because I believe that a more thoughtful process might result in a better and more fiscally responsible proposal than any this body is scheduled to consider today.

Mr. Speaker, in our lifetimes we have seen too many government programs expand to the detriment of our nation. The actual cost of entitlement programs has sometimes doubled, tripled, and even quadrupled that of the original estimate. The authors of this bill have taken many precautions to preserve the private medical insurance system and have attempted to limit government aid to Americans who actually need assistance. My greatest concern about this bill, however, is that it may lure Americans who can afford prescription drugs away from private plans and into the black hole of dependency on the taxpayers. If this Congress adopts this bill we must all remain vigilant and turn away from all tempta-

tions to morph this entitlement program into a monster that will take a trillion dollar bite out of the general revenues.

This Congress will be credited or held responsible for the results of this initiative for many years to come. I, nevertheless, recognize that our nation's seniors are in need and know that we must respond. H.R. 4954 is the best prescription drug benefit plan before us and I support its passage.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 8, 2002

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No.'s 249, 250, 251 and 252, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 249, "yea" on rollcall No. 250, "yea" on rollcall No. 251 and "yea" on rollcall No. 252.

## THE REDEDICATION OF THE CARROLL COUNTY COURTHOUSE

**HON. SAM GRAVES**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 8, 2002

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the rededication of the Carroll County Courthouse on June 29th, 2002, located in Carrollton, Missouri.

This year will mark the 100th year that the courthouse has served the good people of Carroll County. Serving as a place for the community to gather and for the dispensation of justice, the courthouse has stood the test of time. Within its walls, juries have served, county government has convened, and elections have been tallied ensuring that the will of the people of Carroll County is carried out.

Although age and time have been kind to the courthouse, it was not until recently that the courthouse was renovated to include new elevators and restrooms that make it fully accessible to all the people of the county.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in celebrating the Rededication of the Carroll County Courthouse.

## IN RECOGNITION OF HOWARD BERNSTEIN

**HON. E. CLAY SHAW, JR.**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 8, 2002

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to my constituent and friend, Howard Bernstein, of Boca Raton, Florida.

In 1945, instead of being at home with his family, Howard Bernstein was on a ship near

Okinawa, Japan, "engulfed in the fight for freedom." He was fighting a war where the enemy had threatened the security and liberty of his home, a war in which he wondered if "there would even be a tomorrow."

On April 2nd, while going about his duties, his ship encountered a group of Japanese kamikaze planes, bent on destroying his fleet. During the attack, Howard was hit by a piece of shrapnel, injuring his right eye. Not noticing the blood, he continued fighting, seeking medical attention only when the battle had ended. After receiving treatment, he told both the Captain's Yeoman and the medical Corpsman not to report his injury, as he did not want to alarm his mother, who had another son fighting in the Pacific, in addition to having lost her husband unexpectedly.

Howard Bernstein returned home after the war, enjoying the freedom he and his comrades had worked so hard to preserve. Only recently did he want to commemorate his injury with a Purple Heart, as he wanted to have the medal "as part of [his] heritage." However, since Howard had not reported his injury, he was initially denied a Purple Heart. It took two sworn affidavits of support from his former comrades for him to finally be given the tribute he so richly deserves.

Today, we recognize Howard Bernstein for his courage and bravery in battle and his unflagging devotion to home and family. In honoring Howard, we honor all those who would risk their lives to preserve the liberty of all people, and all those who would sacrifice personal gain for the consideration of others.

## TRIBUTE TO COLONEL BRENT SWART

**HON. BOB RILEY**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 8, 2002

Mr. RILEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the retirement of Colonel Brent Swart, the Garrison Commander of the United States Army Aviation and Missile Command (AMCOM) at Redstone Arsenal in Alabama. His unwavering patriotism and dedication to the armed services is truly commendable.

Colonel Swart's 26 years of meritorious service in the Army represent his loyalty to the United States of America. This milestone is one many strive for, but few reach. Colonel Swart is a decorated officer and has received the Army Meritorious Service Medal with four Oak Leaf Clusters, the Parachutist Badge and the Army Commendation and the Army Achievement medals, both with Oak Leaf Clusters. On July 1, 2002, when Colonel Swart retires from 26 years of service, it will truly be a day worthy of commendation.

As the Garrison Commander at AMCOM, it was Colonel Swart's duty to allocate the base's operating budget of over \$130 million. Under his command were 1,649 military, civilian, and contract employees who came to

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